

Orr Award for Most Productive Unit, and the Best Vehicle Operations Flight in the Pacific Air Forces Command among others.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride and heartfelt gratitude that I salute Chief Celento for his service and dedication to our great nation.

RECOGNIZING THE DECATUR TELEPHONE COMPANY

HON. CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2005

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, small and family businesses are the backbone of America's economy. Today I want to recognize one of these family institutions that serve a community in Newton County, Mississippi. In this day of international mergers and billion dollar telecommunication deals, it is wonderful to see a small and stable company continue to provide telephone service to customers after sixty years in the same family. If I may, let me quote from The Newton Record's November 23, 2005 issue and article titled "Decatur Telephone marks 60 years" by Kenneth Billings.

Few enterprises are fortunate enough to reach a milestone one local business will celebrate next month when its owners celebrate more than half a century of operating the business. On Dec. 5, Bill and Louise Bailey will mark their 60th year as owners of the Decatur Telephone Company and the continuation of a family legacy begun in 1945.

"In a way it seems like any other day," Louise Bailey said of the upcoming anniversary. "Sometimes I can't believe it has really been that long. The office has been a part of home so long it is sort of an extension of what we do everyday."

The Baileys purchased the company shortly after Bill returned home from the military and began seeking a vocation. They purchased the company and all 46 customers from Katie Perkins in 1945 and began what would grow into a family legacy.

Over the years they nurtured the business and in 1976 earned the distinction of becoming the first telephone company in the world to be completely digital. Today, Decatur Telephone boasts more than 2,500 customers in the central part of Newton County.

Bill, 84, and Louise, 83, still take an active part in the business, but in recent years have begun to cut back. No longer is all day spent at the helm of the business as they prepare to pass the reins to other family members to carry on the legacy of the business.

Although their son, Mark has gone on to a career in medicine after spending summers at the company as he grew up, their daughter and company Vice President Esther Smith is preparing to take control when time comes for her parents to fully retire. Smith said taking up the family business seemed the natural thing for her to do having spent most of her life inside the offices of the company.

"I have grown up here," she said. "I remember when I would walk 'home' this is where I came. While momma and daddy worked I went into the storeroom and played. I even one time tried to memorize the entire phone book because I thought that was what I had to do."

"Daddy was always so good to look into future. He was a real visionary business person. In the world, technology changes so fast and he was making advances for the company at a critical time. I just hope I can continue on the path daddy started."

The Bailey's said an all-day open house is set for Dec. 5 at the Decatur Telephone Company for customers and friends to join with them in celebrating their anniversary with finger foods and refreshments available.

Mr. Speaker, this month marks 60 years of Bailey Family telephone service to Decatur, Mississippi and hope they will continue for many more decades to come. They make it possible for my constituents to call here to Washington, DC and participate in the great American experiment, the democratic debate of our Congress. They are able to call around the world and down the street. It may be technology that makes it possible, but it could not be done without the hard work of folks like Bill and Louise Bailey and their family.

COMMENDATION FOR ROGER EASTON, NATIONAL MEDAL OF TECHNOLOGY RECIPIENT

HON. CHARLES F. BASS

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2005

Mr. BASS. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to congratulate New Hampshire resident Roger Easton for receiving the National Medal of Technology, America's highest honor for technological achievement.

More importantly, I would like to commend Mr. Easton for four decades of distinguished service to the field of navigation technology and to our Nation. His numerous inventions, from the Minitrack satellite tracking system to the "Navigation System Using Satellites and Passive Ranging Techniques," provided the foundation for the development of the Global Positioning System (GPS) in widespread use today. This crucial technology initially advanced the capacity and effectiveness of U.S. satellites, in addition to providing a measure of increased security in the Cold War era by enabling our military to track unknown objects orbiting the Earth. Mr. Easton's ground-breaking inventions have subsequently inspired the use of GPS technology in the civilian sector, including the system's adaptation for usage in commercial airplanes and personal automobiles.

His contributions as a public servant are equally noteworthy, having served two terms as a colleague of mine in the New Hampshire State Legislature and three terms on the Board of the New Hampshire Electric Cooperative. The National Medal of Technology could not have been bestowed on a more deserving individual, and it is an honor to offer this outstanding contributor to America's economic, environmental, and social well-being my heartfelt congratulations.

STATEMENT ON RELEASE OF RESPONSE BY AMERICA'S SECOND HARVEST TO HURRICANES KATRINA AND RITA

HON. JAMES P. MCGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2005

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, the destruction caused by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

was devastating. More than one thousand people died and thousands of Gulf Coast residents lost their homes in these storms. As we now know, the Federal Government's reaction and response was woefully inadequate. We've seen how FEMA was ill-equipped to handle the catastrophes caused by these massive storms. We know that the then-Administrator of FEMA, Michael Brown, was the wrong choice to head such an important agency and we know that the lives of these Gulf State residents will never be the same because, in part, of the botched Federal response.

The responses to these hurricanes weren't all bad. The residents of the gulf coast were fortunate that there are non-profit organizations that were able to step in and provide the basic services and care to the victims of these storms.

One such group, America's Second Harvest, was a beacon of hope during and after the storm, providing food and water to the victims. America's Second Harvest is the nation's largest hunger-relief charity, and their truckloads of food and water helped support food banks and food-rescue organization in the gulf coast and other impacted areas.

Yesterday, December 15th, America's Second Harvest released a report documenting the impact of emergency food distribution in the wake of these devastating storms. Specifically, this report details the depth and breadth of the impact of the Gulf region hurricane disasters on the charitable food distribution system and the clients it serves. This report shows that demand for emergency food assistance in the Gulf Coast tripled following Hurricane Katrina. Just as startling is the finding that the demand for emergency food assistance continues to be more than fifty percent higher than it was before Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The study also confirms what we know—that low income families and African Americans were disproportionately impacted by the hurricane disasters.

I'm a co-chair of the House Hunger Caucus, a group I helped form to focus on and educate Members of Congress about the issue of hunger. Two days ago, the Caucus hosted a briefing on the food distribution response—Federal Government and private groups—to the hurricanes. What we learned is that we need to tighten up the system. We need to cut red tape so that food and water is on the ground, ready to go into impacted areas right away. We need to educate people in disaster-prone areas so they have adequate supplies of food, water and other necessities.

And we need to make sure that the Federal Government and private groups have clear lines of communication and that there are real plans in place so that the relief and recovery can begin immediately after a disaster. There will be disasters. According to experts, the Gulf Coast is only a mild tropical storm away from being devastated once again. We must take the lessons learned from Katrina and Rita, apply to them now, and get ready for the next natural disaster that will strike.

This report, and the expertise of America's Second Harvest, is a good first step and I'd like to commend Bob Forney and his staff at America's Second Harvest for their work on it and for their dedication to combating and ending hunger in America. As we look into the successes and failures in the days leading up to and the days, weeks and months following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, this report should

play a critical role in the education of the American people, as well as the U.S. Congress, as to how America's emergency food networks responded to these natural disasters. Copies of the report can be found on America's Second Harvest website (www.secondharvest.org).

**CONDEMNING ACTIONS BY SYRIA
REGARDING THE ASSASSINATION
OF FORMER PRIME MINISTER OF
LEBANON**

SPEECH OF

HON. ROBERT WEXLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2005

Mr. WEXLER. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mr. ISSA and Mr. LANTOS for joining me in introducing this critical resolution, which condemns Syrian efforts to hinder the investigation into the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Hariri, expresses support for extending the mandate of the investigative commission, and supports punitive sanctions against Syria if it continues to fail to comply with the ongoing investigation.

On February 14, 2005, former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri was assassinated in a vicious terrorist attack in Beirut, Lebanon that killed 22 and injured more than 100. In response, the U.N. Security Council passed Resolution 1595, establishing an international commission to investigate this attack and demanding the full compliance of all U.N. member states with the investigation.

This commission—led by German prosecutor Detlev Mehlis—released its initial findings in a report that implicated senior Syrian officials in the Hariri assassination. This past week, a second report was released that exposed Syrian efforts to impede and obstruct the investigation, including misleading the commission, providing falsified accounts and threatening those involved in the investigation. At this juncture, we must hold the Syrian regime accountable for their actions and demand Syrian compliance with the ongoing investigation.

Since the assassination of Prime Minister Hariri, targeted assassinations aimed at intimidating Lebanese opponents of Syria have continued unabated. Just this past week, a prominent and well-respected journalist was killed in a car-bombing in Beirut. Make no mistake; this was a clear attempt to limit freedom of the press in Lebanon on the part of the Syrian regime.

This resolution does just that. It supports the findings of the Mehlis report, condemns the Syrian Government for its apparent involvement in the assassination of former Prime Minister Hariri and others, and demands Syrian compliance. It also supports U.S.-led efforts to hold Syria accountable for its role in the Hariri assassination under Chapter 7 of the U.N. Charter, which leaves the door open for sanctions.

As the U.N. considers the grave and far-reaching implications of the Mehlis report, I strongly support critical and timely resolution.

HONORING FLORIDA STATE
SENATOR PAULA DOCKERY

HON. ADAM H. PUTNAM

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2005

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a fellow public servant and dear friend, whose dedication and hard work has earned the admiration of not only the people of Florida, but public officials nationally as well. This is why I am proud to congratulate Florida State Senator Paula Dockery for her well-earned selection as Governing Magazine's 2005 "Public Official of the Year."

Senator Dockery was one of only eight public officials from across the country, and the only Florida official, to be so honored. She was recognized by Governing Magazine "in honor of her success in bringing diverse groups together to craft a sound and far-reaching water policy for the State of Florida." The magazine also stated "Since being elected to the House in 1996 and subsequently to the Senate, Dockery has demonstrated the ability to build consensus among groups with a history of contention." Senator Dockery has also recently been awarded "Legislator of the Year" by the American Water Works Association for her "outstanding leadership and dedication in developing water supply legislation for the people of Florida." Additionally, the Florida Ocean Alliance presented the Senator with an award of appreciation for sponsoring legislation that established the Florida Ocean and Coastal Resource Council noting her "leadership in sponsoring legislation to further conservation and management of ocean and coastal resources."

Yet, this is only a small portion of Senator Dockery's long history of bringing together disparate interests to craft sound environmental policy. As a defender of private property rights and protecting Florida's environmental resources, she constantly recognizes the importance of sound conservation principles in a rapidly growing State.

I had the opportunity to serve with Senator Dockery in the Florida State House of Representatives for 4 years, and it is her dedication to the common good, passion for legislating, and ability to inspire her colleagues, that has led the way to her success. In 1999, Senator Dockery authored the Florida Forever initiative, providing \$300 million a year to purchase land for preservation. Business interests and environmentalists both praised the program. In addition, she followed this initiative with the goal of developing a water plan for Florida. Spending much of 2003 and 2004 developing legislation to conserve water for Florida's future, Senator Dockery successfully led the passage of SB 444 in 2005, creating comprehensive water legislation that provides \$300 million to help local governments develop water supply through alternative resources.

The constituents of Senate District 15 and the State as a whole are extremely blessed to have her leadership serving them in Tallahassee. As the Senator continues to proudly serve the good people of Florida, I look forward to many more accomplishments as she continues to lead and guide the future of our great State.

IN RECOGNITION OF COMPANY
ALPHA, 2ND BATTALION, 112TH
ARMOR OF DENTON

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2005

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a dedicated group of soldiers from Denton, Texas, who have devoted their lives to saving our country and bringing freedom to the people of Iraq—the soldiers of Company Alpha, 2nd Battalion, 112th Armor of Denton.

Denton's Company A is part of the 3,000 members of the 56th Brigade Combat Team of the Texas National Guard's 36th Infantry Division, which recently turned over its command to the Georgia Army National Guard's 48th Brigade Combat Team in Macon, Georgia.

Deployed in August of 2004, the soldiers from Denton trained at Fort Hood, Texas, through December of last year before embarking to Iraq. While in Iraq, they were stationed at Al Taqaddum, or "TQ" Airbase between Fallujah and Ramadi, Iraq.

During the year-long deployment in Operation Iraqi Freedom, the 56th Brigade took part in combat missions, humanitarian relief, convoy security and the recovery and destruction of munitions. They were engaged in more than 7,000 combat patrols, escorted convoys over 1.3 million miles and protected more than 150,000 civilian trucks. Most of the operations took place at night, and patrols lasted 12 to 14 hours. The soldiers encountered more than 330 improvised explosive devices while traveling on Iraqi roads, and the patrols were involved in more than 250 small-arms engagements.

These brave soldiers from Denton include: CPT Mark Christopher Grahmann, 1st LT Chester Lee Harbert, 1st SG Charles George Piatt, SFC Kevin Jay Brown, SSG Lonnie Ray Fuller, SGT Ryan Colby Erwin, SSG Michael Samson Bowen, SGT Andrew Culloden Bell, Chris William Coufal, SGT Ashley Brant Acevedo, SGT Shane Benjamin Walter, SPC John Christopher Britton, SPC Scott Alan Dolat, SSG Mark Steven Sims.

**BROWNFIELDS REDEVELOPMENT
ENHANCEMENT ACT**

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL R. TURNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 13, 2005

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 280, the Brownfields Revitalization Enhancement Act. I want to thank Congressman MILLER from California for his hard work and dedication toward the issue of brownfields redevelopment. I look forward to working with Congressman MILLER in the future on this issue.

Brownfield sites are served by an existing infrastructure and through their remediation, urban sprawl can be reduced. Redeveloping brownfields could create 1.9 billion dollars annually in increased tax revenues for American cities.

H.R. 280 provides grant money to cities and towns to redevelop brownfield sites. This bill also detaches grant availability from section